

Message Text

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PAGE 01 GABORO 02698 011120Z POSS DUPE
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 ACDA-12 /083 W
-----042666 011237Z /20

O R 010926Z NOV 77
FM AMEMBASSY GABORONE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0944
INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
USMISSION USUN NY

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: MOPS BC
SUBJ: ALLEGED RHODESIAN ATTACK ON BOTSWANA DEFENSE FORCE OCT 30

1. DAILY NEWS OF NOV 1 CARRIES FOLLOWING ANNOUNCEMENT OF
BOTSWANA DEFENSE FORCE:

QUOTE

THE BOTSWANA DEFENCE FORCE HEADQUARTERS HAS ANNOUNCED THAT
THERE WAS AN ATTACK ON BOTSWANA DEFENCE FORCE PERSONNEL AT
KAZUNGULA ON SUNDAY, OCTOBER 30, 1977, AT 2 A.M. THE ATTACK
WAS MOUNTED BY RHODESIA REBEL FORCES WHO FIRED MORTARS AND
SMALL ARMS AT AN OBSERVATION POST MANNER BY BDF PERSONNEL.

BOTSWANA DEFENCE FORCE RETURNED FIRE AND THERE WAS SPORADIC
EXCHANGE OF FIRE UNTIL 6:30 P.M. THE SAME DAY AND NUMEROUS
MORTAR SHELLS WERE FIRED INTO BOTSWANA FROM RHODESIA.

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MEMBERS OF THE BDF SUFFERED NO CASUALTIES AND IT IS NOT
KNOWN WHETHER ANY CASUALTIES WERE INFLICTED ON THE REBEL
SOLDIERS.

THE REASONS FOR THIS UNPROVOKED ATTACK ARE NOT KNOWN.

UNQUOTE

2. AFTER CHECKING WITH PRESIDENTIAL PRIVATE SECRETARY
LEGWAILA, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS UNDER-SECRETARY MOGAMI TOLD EMBOFF
LATE OCT 31 THAT ALTHOUGH ALL THE DETAILS WERE NOT YET
KNOWN IN GABORONE, THE AFFAIR APPEARED TO BE SMALL AND NOTHING
OUT OF THE ORDINARY FOR SUCH CLASHES.

3. EMBASSY ASSUMES THAT ANY EXCHANGE BETWEEN THE RHODESIAN
SECURITY FORCES AND THE BDF PROBABLY GREW OUT OF EXTENSIVE
WEEKEND FIGHT (EIGHTEEN HOURS) BETWEEN ZAMBIANS AND RHODESIAN
IN KAZUNGULA AREA AS REPORTED BY BBC ON OCT 31.

4. AT SAME TIME, FLIGHTS FROM POINTS IN BOTSWANA TO LUSAKA
WERE CANCELLED OCT 30 AND 31 DUE TO ZAMBIAN CLOSURE OF AIR-
SPACE, A SAFETY MEASURE UNDOUBTEDLY TAKEN BECAUSE OF LARGER
FIGHT BETWEEN ZAMBIANS AND RHODESIANS. AIR BOTSWANA TRAFFIC
SUPERINTENDENT TOLD EMBOFF CLOSURE LIFTED ON NOV 1 AND THE
FLIGHTS WOULD RESUME TO LUSAKA ON THAT DATE.
NORLAND

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NNN

Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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